

amendments to the present claims. As discussed during the interviews, the claims have been amended to clarify that the non-zeolite heat-resistant oxide component is that which is loaded with a noble metal. However, according to Inoue et al. and JP '061, the zeolite component, not the non-zeolite heat-resistant oxide, is loaded with a noble metal. See the remarks of the Amendment filed December 2, 1996 in the parent application.

For at least the foregoing reasons, withdrawal of the art rejection based upon Inoue et al. and JP '061 is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Examiner Preisch is requested to issue a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims.

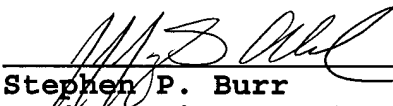
Should Examiner Preisch deem that any further action by the applicants would be desirable for placing this application in even better condition for issue, she is requested to telephone applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

PARKHURST, WENDEL & BURR, L.L.P.

Date

5/16/97


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